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# ALASKA People

January/February 1997

1998



The Northern District Office website begins with this image.

## Fairbanks Websites Take Their Hits

by Andy Williams

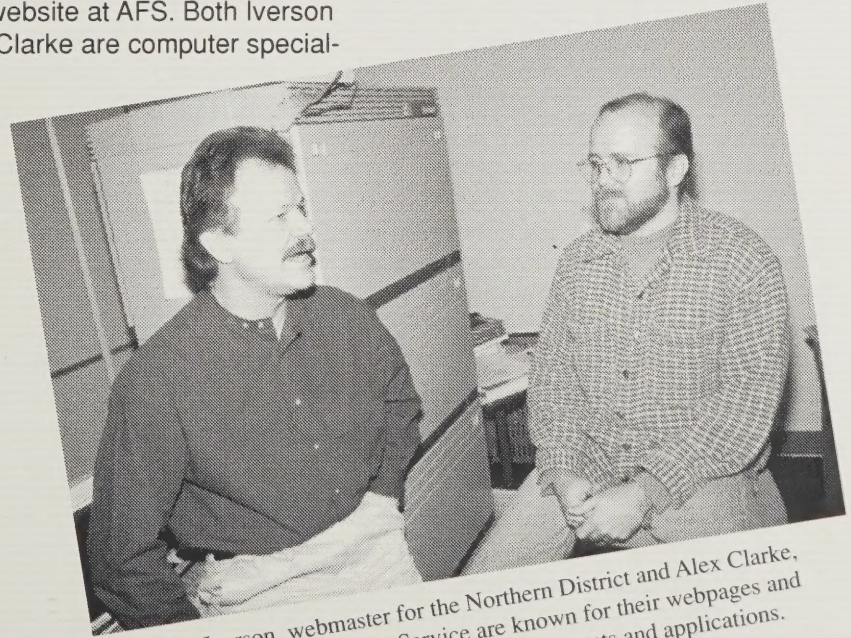
The draft environmental impact statement for the National Petroleum Reserve-Alaska is nearly two inches thick and weighs 4 1/2 pounds. Yet it fit easily into the Northern District Office website on the Internet. The electronic version was available for people to read two weeks before the printed version. The draft EIS was available in mid-December.

The Alaska Fire Service uses the Internet to provide fire weather information from its Initial Attack Management System and the latest fire situation reports. With the click of a button, viewers can see maps showing various fuel moisture and fire weather indices, the crew rotation list showing where emergency firefighter crews are located on fires, news releases, and information about fire assignments and hiring in Alaska.

At both NDO and AFS, the Internet has proven to be a powerful tool for sharing information. Steve Iverson is the webmaster at NDO, while Alex Clarke designed the website at AFS. Both Iverson and Clarke are computer special-

ists with the Branch of Technical Systems at AFS.

The NPR-A report, which studies the northeast corner of the reserve for possible oil and gas leasing, contains 750 pages of text, 94 maps and nine appendices. All are posted on the website, with a handy table of contents and links to maps and tables. "The maps and tables are located throughout the document. In addition, there's a (continued on next page)



(l-r) Steve Iverson, webmaster for the Northern District and Alex Clarke, webmaster for the Alaska Fire Service are known for their webpages and keeping up with the latest in computer advancements and applications.

*continued from front page*

space where they are all listed together," Iverson said.

The report, which was posted on the NDO website by a contractor through the Minerals Management Service, received 3,800 "hits" in November. The NDO site as a whole was visited 8,000 times.

**"She said the site was great because she could track her sons' whereabouts."**

**Alex Clarke**

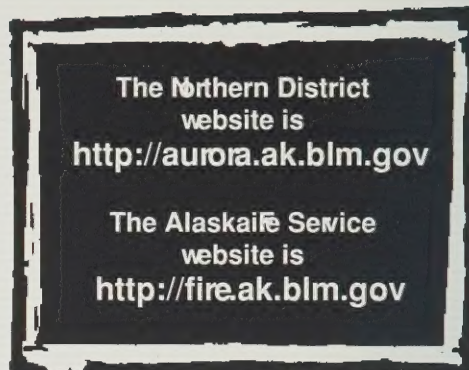
The NDO site offers a handy "clickable image map" of Alaska to link with the geographic teams. Outdoor recreation planner Randy Goodwin, realty specialist Paul Salvatore and others assisted in

designing the sites, which provide useful information to visitors interested in BLM-managed public lands in Alaska. A live camera shows actual weather conditions outside the NDO building in Fairbanks.

The AFS website was developed initially to deliver weather information from Remote Automated Weather Stations (RAWS) to land managers and others who use it for tactical purposes.

Now people can access RAWS data by clicking on "Latest Weather Info" on the website, along with fire weather indices calculated by the National Weather Service. A variety of maps are available. The Situation Report produced each morning by the Alaska Interagency Coordination Center is usually posted on the Internet by 8:30 a.m. It used to be copied, faxed and e-mailed.

The 1997 fire season was the first one for the website, and it has quickly become the preferred way to share information among AFS



and other fire suppression personnel, land managers and the public. Clarke said one user was a mother in New Orleans whose two sons worked on hotshot crews here. "She said the site was great because she could track her sons' whereabouts," he said.

Both Clarke and Iverson have received special achievement awards for their work with the websites.

Visit the websites to learn more about BLM programs and see the quality of their work.

Andy Williams is a writer-editor with Public Affairs for the Northern District in Fairbanks.

## Health



### Laughter as Medicine

Besides lowering blood pressure, increasing muscle flexion; laughter's most profound effects are on the immune system. Gamma-interferon, a disease fighting protein rises with laughter. B cells also increase in number which produce disease-destroying antibodies and t-cells which orchestrate the immune response. Laughter stops the production of stress hormones—the compounds which affect us in times of stress, hostility and rage. These

hormones suppress the immune system, increase the production of platelets - which can cause blockages in the arteries.

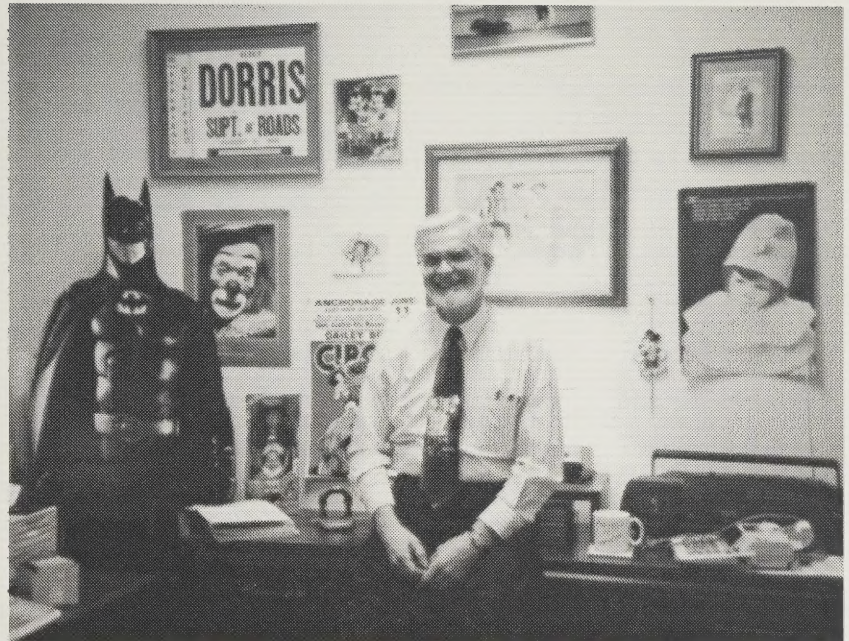
The average child laughs hundreds of times a day. While the average adult laughs only a dozen times. So why not laugh more? It's good for you!!!

Sources: American Association for Therapeutic Humor; Lee Berk, MD and Stanley Tan, Md, Loma Linda University

**Working on something interesting? Do you know of a fellow employee working on some cool project? Send short, concise information to Danielle Allen by e-mail or call with story ideas!! Guest writers are welcome!!!!**

David Dorris did not leave the Belmont University of Nashville to begin a career with BLM. Instead he worked for a national credit reporting company and the Nashville Planning Commission. In 1967, he earned his graduate degree in planning from the University of Tennessee.

During the next few years, he took his young family to Anchorage, to the lower 48 and back as he held down a series of planning jobs. In 1972, he began his federal career with the Alaska Land Use Planning Commission. The years flew with Dorris working as lead planner for the NPRA 105c studies, Chief of Biological Resources within the Div. of Resources and Chief of Planning for the now defunct Office of Management, Planning and Budget in the Alaska State Office. He was Project Manager for the AJ Mine EIS when he transferred to the Joint Pipeline Office.



## David Dorris

### Special Projects Coordinator

**How long have you lived in Alaska?** From January 1969 to 1971. Returned in November 1972. (27 1/2 years)

**What do you enjoy most about your job?** I work with the Alyeska Pipeline employee concerns program, and once in a while I get to help someone.

**What is the last book you've read (or are currently reading)?** (David's wife, Rachel, owns the Twice Told Tales bookstore so he's usually reading several books at a time). I'm currently reading *The Israelis* by Amos Elon (it's about the founding and political development of Israel).

**What is your idea of a good time?** In the summer, fishing on a quiet stream; in the fall, a nice dinner and live theatre or watching University of Tennessee football games; and in the winter or anytime, swing dancing to the music of the big bands.

**What was your favorite job?** Under a Mike Penfold reorganization, I became the planning director for the Office of Management Planning and Budget. I worked with a superb group of people and developed resource management plans.

**If you had one year to live, what would you do?** Take Rachel to England, see every play on Broadway, visit every person who affected my life and say thank you, and spend

the rest of the time with my four grandkids.

**Name one thing which people would be surprised to know about you?** I collect ties!!! I have hundreds and I never wear the same one during the year. I'm particularly interested in acquiring ties from the 1930s and 1940s.

**What does your "ultimate meal" consist of?** At home, boiled cabbage, onions fixed anyway, pinto beans, green beans cooked to death with bacon, Tennessee barbecue or catfish and brown sugar pie. In a restaurant, fresh sauteed mussels, spinach with cream and almonds, yeast rolls, green salad, white wine or light rose' and apple pie with cheese.

**What bad habit would you like to break?** I'm a compulsive worker. I leave work and go home and work. I need to relax more.

**What is your favorite place?** After home, I like Kauai in January, February or March; Alaska in the summer; Tennessee in the spring and anyplace in the Smokey Mountains during the fall.

**What is the most important thing you've learned since working for the BLM?** I've survived four state directors, six reorganizations, quality councils, TQM, management by objectives, management by team and a half a dozen other organizational fads. SO I have learned to be flexible, be positive and be from Montana or Utah!!

# COOL

## North Slope Borough Wants Our Expertise.

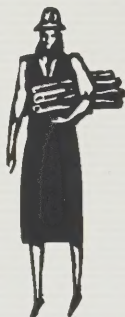
The North Slope Borough was so impressed with the Branch of Mapping Science's detailed computer mapping of Native allotments within the National Petroleum Reserve-Alaska that they gave BLM a grant for \$50,000 to do the same for them.

**Gus Panos** negotiated the grant which has BLM responsible for:

- scanning master title plats of North Slope Borough lands which contain Native allotments.

- vectorizing Native allotments (georeferencing and attributing the allotments)

- link the Native allotments to data from the BLM Land Information System and Bureau of Indian Affairs databases.

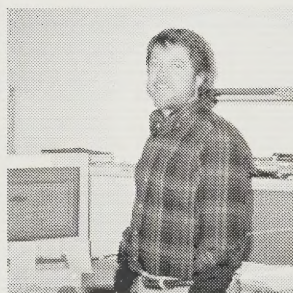


while improving security and making better use of space.

Becker and Cross coordinated with Glennallen Field Office's Maintenance provider, **Kurt Sorenson**, to design counters and rear-range records storage and mail room

equipment. Campbell Tract's **Doug Dickenson, Gary Jamison** and **Don Lofton** assisted by moving radio and computer equipment to accommodate the new layout.

"We have received a lot of positive customer comments on the changes," says Becker. "Monica and I came up with the ideas and tried to make it as user friendly, for everyone—customers and Glennallen Field Office employees—as possible."



**Charles Hill** is doing the mapping work for the North Slope Borough Native allotment project.

## Let's Hear it for the P Word -

**PARTNERSHIP!** It is commonly known by the employees working on the draft NPR-A environmental impact statement that BLM couldn't have met its deadline without the help of the Minerals Management Service. Right after the draft was released in December, SD **Tom Allen** and ASD **Sally Wisely** presented the MMS with BLM's 1997 Outstanding Partnership Award for its contribution of staff and expertise to the EIS effort.

## Not So Cool. Is it the Season for

**Accidents?** Recently, several employees have been in accidents involving automobiles; an employee was even run over by a moose while sitting on his snowmobile. So the word from the safety officer is to wear your seat belts and be cautious. Also remember those employees away from the office due to injury or illness..

## Employees Redesign Office With Customers in Mind.

Glennallen Field Office staff issue thousands of federal subsistence hunting permits and assist hundreds of other customers each year. Realty clerks **Monica Cross** and **Brenda Becker** decided that by reorganizing the front office area they could provide better customer service



Australian tourists Heath and Sarah Fea sent this picture of Northern District ranger Mike Bilbe and them. Last summer Bilbe helped them fix three tires on the Dalton Highway.

# News



**Deborah Williams**, special assistant to the Secretary of Interior presents **John Rumps**, a plaque recognizing the high percentage of blood donated by the BLM to the Blood Bank drive. Rumps is BLM's blood bank coordinator. Giving is even easier than ever since the Blood Bank of Alaska makes quarterly visits to the Anchorage Federal Building. The next opportunity to donate blood is February 12. (Also pictured (l-r) **John Roberts, John Spacer, Robin Wellhouse, Williams, Betty Lockard, Renee Elliott, Rumps.**

## Campbell Tract Employees Keep on Giving, Giving, and Giving.

Some have retired, others have moved to other offices. But the "spirit of giving" at Christmas remains high at the Campbell Tract.

**Suz Martin**, branch of field and office services, says "This year we did exceptionally well." The Campbell Tract employees contributed 638 pounds of toys, meat, non-perishable food, clothing and hygiene articles to the Anchorage Telephone Utility warehouse where the items were distributed to local disadvantaged families in Anchorage.

"Employees gave money as well. "In fact," said Martin, "we went to Sam's and spent \$198 on toys and personal items." Carrs Quality center gave them a "good deal" on

turkeys.

Working on the Christmas Charity committee with Martin were branch employees **Dede Domingos, Sandee Smith, Gary Jamieson, Liza Raymundo, and Rita Gutierrez. Kathy Stubbs and Renee Fencel** represented the Anchorage District. Next year's goal is to get more appropriate items for 12 - 17 year olds.



## It Was a Festive and Generous Christmas for the Northern District.

The Northern District staff was in a festive mood at the annual Christmas party Dec. 17 when they anted up \$3,233 at the White Elephant Auction to benefit Santa's Clearing House in Fairbanks.

It was the most money raised since the auction became an annual event 20 years ago. Santa's

Clearing House donates food boxes and toys to needy families during the holidays.

Organized by **Randi Jandt**, Dalton Team wildlife biologist, the potluck luncheon featured Santa Claus, in the person of **Don Erickson**, Alaska Fire Service property specialist who was also the auctioneer. Staffers brought nearly 60 presents ranging from a lump of coal to an art print, but the uncertainty did not sway the crowd from bidding up the price of the packages.

**Howard Smith**, Northwest Team archeologist, said many items, including the lump of coal, make repeat appearances. "An old teapot with a cracked lid has been around since at least 1985," he said.



Santa's helpers **Don Erickson** and **Randi Jandt** take bids at the Northern District Office's annual Christmas party and White Elephant Auction Dec. 17. Bidders pledged \$3,233 for gift-wrapped packages. Photo by Dan Gullickson

# COUNTERPOINT:

## Employee Looks at Other Retirement Options

*An Alaska People story (Sept. issue) written by Scott Guyer on how spending habits can jeopardize your retirement prompted this response.*

**by Larry Evans**

I commend Scott Guyer for his article on retirement and his encouragement that everyone save as much as possible for the future. The principles he promotes of discipline, looking ahead, and a commitment to savings are good advice. His perspective on the age for retirement is based, however, from a single person's viewpoint without children. I believe his viewpoint is too narrow for those "Married with Children."

I'm approaching 60 and still working (actually 57, with 32 years service), I take exception to Scott's implication that poor planning, poor discipline, and lack of sacrifice require folks to work until 60 or beyond. Children and young adults are expensive to rear.

Children that participate in travel team competitive level sports, advanced music lessons and choirs, equestrian activities or other activities require considerable time and money. Costs can run \$5,000 to \$6,000 a year. It takes planning, discipline and sacrifice to afford these activities, and it limits one's ability to save for the future. I maintain that if you know that your children are constructively involved, who they are involved with, and what they are doing, you have a stronger chance of rearing a responsible member of society. That is an investment that is difficult to place a dollar value on, but I personally believe it is a price worth paying.



# FINANCIAL

- \$ The average government worker is 44 years old.
- \$ The average FERS Thrift account for those hired after 1983 is \$32,155
- \$ The average CSRS Thrift account is \$20,017
- \$ Year-to-date C-fund return =28.35% (1997)
- \$ Year-to-date F-fund return =7.5% (1997)
- \$ Year-to-date G-fund return =6.78% (1997)
- \$ Some C-fund investors who invested the maximum from the

start of their account have accounts exceeding \$250,000

- \$ At the end of November, the C-fund account had investments worth \$28 billion, F-fund 3 billion and the G-fund nearing \$25 billion.
- \$ Thrift fund investors can monitor their account balances by calling (504) 255-8777; you must know your social security number and pin #.

*\* Statistics taken from M. Causey articles in the Washington Post dated 12/14; 12/12/97.*

The advantages of a college education come with a heavy price. Many parents will be faced with those expenses in the days ahead. Yes, students can borrow money for their education, but those costs are rising rapidly with no decline in sight. Survey branch chief Jerry Pinkerton (60+) and I are supporting offspring in their quest for degrees and advance degrees. Most graduate programs are full-year programs lasting two or more years. The student has no opportunity to earn and must depend on student loans and parents to finance their education. Both Jerry and I have sons in graduate school. We are still on the payroll so we can

help our offspring realize their personal and financial dreams. Believe me, we have exercised extensive planning, rigid discipline and long-term sacrifice.

I definitely support Scott's message about the habit of saving. But I know that real world demands make it difficult to save consistently for retirement. Each person has to decide what they can realistically save and then stick to their plan. I personally won't feel guilty if I continue to work at 60 if the nest egg isn't large enough.

---

**Larry Evans is the branch chief for field surveys in the Division of Cadastral Survey.**

# Comings



It's catch up time! These are employees hired and employee departures for the 1997 calendar year. (List is incomplete.)

**Bieber, Patricia**, staff assistant, Anchorage Field Office  
**Greene, Deb**, Campbell Creek Science Center Director, Anchorage Field Office  
**Jarussi, Kathy**, personnel asst., Fairbanks  
**McGuire, Tom**, hazardous materials coordinator, Northern Field Office  
**Smyth, Melanie**, cartographic technician, Division of Cadastral Survey  
**Stimson, David**, ranger, Anchorage Field Office  
**Stimson, Nancy**, outdoor recreation planner, Anchorage District  
**Thompson, Cindy**, purchasing agent, Glennallen District  
**Wellhouse, Robin**, cartographic technician, Div. of Cadastral Survey  
**Williams, Sheila**, personnel asst., Fairbanks

**Einarsen, Robert**, land surveyor, Div. of Cadastral Survey (resigned)  
**Douglas, Richard**, cartographic technician, Div. of Cadastral Survey (resigned)  
**Feher, Sandor**, land surveyor, Division of Cadastral Survey (retired)  
**Gerke, Henry**, special assistant, Division of Lands, Minerals and Resources (retired)  
**Grafton, Evy**, land law assistant, Div. of Conveyance Management (retired)  
**Holmes, Suvina**, land status assistant, Div. of Cadastral Survey (to FAA)  
**Jackson, Frances**, clerical assistant, Office Services, Alaska Fire Service to FAA  
**Lillian, Patricia**, budget analyst, Div. of Support Services (retired)  
**Lyon, Carl**, land surveyor, Div. of Cadastral Survey (retired)  
**More, Dorothy**, staff assistant, Aviation Management, Alaska Fire Service (retired)  
**Ridinger, Don**, maintenance worker, Fortymile Team, Northern Field Office, in Tok (retired)  
**White, Frank**, cartographic tech., Div. of Cadastral Survey (resigned)



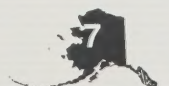
# Transition



# Goings

**Adair, James**, cartographic technician, Div. of Cadastral Survey (resigned)  
**Bonin, Mary**, land law examiner, Div. of Conveyance Management (retired)  
**Boone, Earl**, geologist, Joint Pipeline Office (retired)  
**Boos, Paul**, outdoor recreation specialist, Division of Lands, Minerals and Resources (retired)  
**Brupbacher, Judy**, budget assistant, Northern District (to OAS, Anchorage)  
**Cross, Monica**, realty assistant (to National Park Service, Fairbanks)  
**Early, Dick**, Acting Branch Chief, Supply, Alaska Fire Service (retired)  
**Eklund, Janelle**, outdoor recreation planner, Anchorage Field Office (resigned)

**Benson, Dennis**, realty specialist, Anchorage Field Office to ASO Div. of Conveyance Management  
**McCoy, Pat**, archaeologist, Glennallen Field Office to BLM Nevada  
**Morris, Joe**, ranger, Glennallen Field Office to BLM Northern District Office  
**Parkan, Chris**, Galena Fire Management Zone Coordination Officer, to BLM Elko District, Nevada  
**Pearson, Pat**, land law examiner, Div. of Lands, Minerals & Resources to ASO Div. of Conveyance Management  
**Politch, Steve**, communications planner, Aviation Management, Alaska Fire Service to BLM Cedar City District, Utah  
**Posey, Bob**, ranger, Northern Field Office to BLM Miles City, Montana  
**Sansone, Jerri**, realty specialist, Anchorage Field Office to ASO Div. of Conveyance Mgmt.  
**Walker, Leroy**, equal employment specialist, ASO to Joint Pipeline Office  
**Tracy, Randy**, ranger, Anchorage Field Office to BLM Farmington, N. Mexico



## Why do employees come to work sick? and what should be done about it?

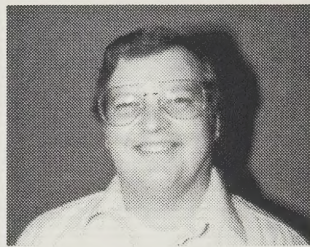


**Cindy Thompson**  
Purchasing Agent  
Glennallen Field Office

Many people don't feel they are sick enough to warrant/require taking a day off. If someone within the office feels that this person should not be at work then tell them to go home.

Who is going to set the standards as to when an individual should stay home and when they should still go to work? What about the people that do not have the sick leave saved up to take this time off from work?

Most people are smart enough to know when they really should stay home from work.



**Tim Grinnell**  
Health & Safety Spec.  
Northern Field Office

Most employees feel that it is easier to come to work sick and do the work, rather than take time off and come back to work waiting for them. The problem is that sick people who come to work give that sickness to others. People need to take care of themselves and realize the job may never be finished at the end of the day. Work your eight hours, do your best, go home and devote all your energies to your family and/or yourself. I feel that our new BLM Director is challenging us to do just that.



**Suz Martin**, Office Auto. Asst.  
Br. of Field & Office Service  
Campbell Tract Facility

Maybe employees don't have any sick leave, or they feel pressure because they have so much to do at work that if they miss a day they will never catch up. Of course this causes a snowball effect because the entire office is exposed to whatever virus is out there.

We all need to be responsible. Take a few precautionary measures like washing your hands, drinking plenty of fluids, and exercising to keep a healthy immune system. And if you are sick, don't come to work.



**Laura Andrewyuk**  
Land Law Assistant  
Div. of Conveyance Mgmt.

Most employees cannot pay for the high cost of medical assistance and/or don't have sick leave. People may not come to work sick, but the ventilation in the building is so bad you become sick during the day.

Offer better medical insurance and improve the airflow in the federal building.

### **Alaska People**

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